

REMARKS

Claims 49-62 and 64-66 are pending. Claim 49 has been amended to incorporate the features of Claim 63 (now canceled) therein, and Claims 64-65 have been amended to change their dependencies in view of the cancellation of Claim 63. Claim 66 is new, and recites additionally patentable subject matter. In view of this submission, Applicants request reconsideration, a withdrawal of all rejections and a Notice of Allowability.

Claims 49-51, 55-59 and 61-63 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated “Ethanol Extraction of Rubber Components” to Bepak (“Bepak”). Applicants respectfully traverse each and every aspect of this rejection.

Bepak does not disclose all features of the present invention and therefore does not anticipate the claims in question. Bepak teaches an ethanol gasket washing process that is clearly distinct from Applicants, namely a process that is static in nature. To be more specific, and to illustrate such process, the gaskets are in a production rig, the rig is filled with ethanol, the ethanol is heated, and the heated ethanol begins to be distilled in a continuous cycle. Thereafter the components are dried (Bepak, page 1, 6th paragraph).

Applicants’ process is more dynamic in that the gasket and solution are subject to agitation. Such a process is advantageous in that it is believed to require less time compared to the process taught by Bepak.

Clearly the claims of the present invention are not anticipated by Bepak.

In addition, Claim 66 recites additionally patentable subject matter. Claim 66 recites a drying step occurring via vacuum. Bepak teaches a drying step that occurs in the production rig, without employing a vacuum.

In view of the above, a withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) is respectfully solicited.

The points of the Office Action being addressed in full, a Notice of Allowability is respectfully solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,

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